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## Ashland's Acting Police Chief Brings Many Years of Service to New Role

BY CYNTHIA WHITTY

This summer Lt. Richard Briggs was sworn in as Ashland's acting police chief, replacing Chief Vincent Alfano who retired after 2 ½ years of service. Briggs began his law enforcement career 28 years ago and has served in the Ashland police department for 20 years.

Briggs began his career as a dispatcher with the Mashpee Police Department and then served as a police officer for Babson College and Northeastern University. Before coming to Ashland, he was a full time police officer for two years in the Town of Dover.

Ashland Local Town Pages asked Lt. Briggs about his qualifications and experience, his priorities for the coming months, and what he enjoys on his off hours.



**Lt. Richard Briggs takes on a new role as Ashland's acting police chief.** (Photo/supplied)

**Whitty: What experience prepares you for this new role?**

I've been a police officer in Ashland for 20 years, beginning as a part-time police officer in 2001, and was appointed full time in 2002. Since then, I have served as a patrol officer, school resource officer, sergeant/patrol supervisor, lieutenant, and

executive officer. As the executive officer, I assisted the chief of police with the day-to-day operations of the police department.

From 1999 to 2009, I was a Call Firefighter/EMT with the Ashland Fire Department where I also served as a member of the Massachusetts Fire District 14's Regional Dive Rescue Team.

For several years, I served as the Commanding Officer of the Search and Rescue Division of the Metropolitan Law Enforcement Council, which is a consortium of 43+ local area police departments and law enforcement agencies. These agencies work in collaboration to provide unique, and highly

## Ashland Artist Donates Dramatic Seascape to Library

BY CYNTHIA WHITTY

A small group of library friends gathered in midsummer to formally accept a seascape from Ashland artist Al Perry and his daughter Lisa. The painting, called "Thunderous Waves," now hangs above one of the library's fireplaces in the front of the building.

"This painting was exhibited here a few years ago, and we just loved it. We are thankful to Al and his family for gifting it to the library where it holds a place of honor," Meena Jain, Ashland's library director, said to the group. "Thanks to Larry DeJong for helping us with the acquisition process and for mounting it so beautifully above the fire place."

DeJong, the library's art exhibit coordinator, said he first heard about Perry from a former library trustee, who mentioned an artist having an exhibit of paintings in the complex's community building

where they both live. DeJong visited Perry and was amazed by the quantity and quality of his work. DeJong asked himself, "Why have I not heard about him before?"

In 2018 DeJong arranged to have an exhibit of Perry's paintings at the library. "Thunderous Wave" was placed over one of the fireplaces, and it fit perfectly in the space. When the exhibit ended, DeJong kept Perry's large paintings up for four more months, until the end of January 2019.

"It was in the early part of this year that Al contacted me and expressed his desire to donate the painting to the library on behalf of himself and his wife, Joyce, who had passed away a few years earlier," DeJong said.

Now 92 years old, Perry received his BFA degree in painting from Mass College of Art in 1953.

**ARTISTS**

*continued on page 2*

**CHIEF**

*continued on page 2*

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**CHIEF**

*continued from page 1*

specialized law enforcement resources including SWAT, Crowd Control, Search and Rescue, and K-9 support to member communities.

I am currently a member of FEMA's Massachusetts Task Force 1 Urban Search and Rescue Team where I am assigned as a Canine Search Specialist and paired with a 5-year old Labrador retriever specially trained to detect victims buried in collapsed buildings and structures.

With my background in social work, I also work as part-time clinician with the Onsite Academy in Westminster, Mass., which is a non-profit, residential treatment and training center for critical incident stress management. Onsite Academy serves first responders, emergency service workers and military personnel suffering from stress related disorders."

**Whitty: What are your priorities for the coming months?**

My primary goal in the first few months as Police Chief will be to build upon my foundational understanding of Ashland, build new relationships, enhance communication, and develop a strategic plan for the police department. I am also currently working to fill several vacancies within the police department, finalize preparations for the security of the 125th running of the Boston Marathon [on Monday, Oct. 11], and to plan the move of the Police Department into the new Public Safety Building within the next year or less. It's something the men and women of the Police Department are extremely excited about.

**Whitty: What about off hours?**

I grew up in Plymouth, Mass., where my dad still resides. I have three sisters and several nieces and nephews. I currently live in the Town of Medway with my three Labrador retrievers: Phedra, Penny and Pharon. Outside of work I enjoy several hobbies including motorcycle riding, dog training, boxing, and Brazilian Jujitsu.

**ARTISTS**

*continued from page 1*

Over his distinguished career, he worked as a senior graphic designer, illustrator, painter, fine arts teacher and did fine arts restoration and research.

Perry enjoys doing impressionistic oil painting, abstract painting, and collage. His impressionist work focuses on the beauty of the natural world as seen in landscapes, seascapes, and still life. His paintings and collages have been represented in galleries in New England and New York and in private and corporate collections. "Having fun while insisting on really being serious is the most important part of my work," he says. "I'm calling on the viewer to exercise their sense of discovery."

The Ashland library has over 40 works of art in its permanent collection, which consists mainly of local artists. The subjects generally deal with New England landscapes and seascapes. DeJong explained that Perry's painting is "dramatic and very well done," and fits well with the Ashland library collection.



Several library trustees (l to r), Linda Weene, Kab Rabinowitz, and Bonnie Mitchell, were among the group that welcomed Ashland artist Al Perry on July 23. (Photo/Meena Jain)

**Art on Display in the Library**

DeJong is pleased to announce that library art exhibits will resume in September.

- December to Mid-January 2022: Annual Senior Citizen Water Colors

**Gallery (Downstairs)**

- September: Nikki Vene—Realistic Paintings
- October: Tom Doran—Photographs (semi abstract)
- November: John Sheffius—Paintings of Glaciers

**Display Case (Upstairs)**

- September to Mid-November: Visi Talik—Ceramics and Jewelry
- Mid-November to Mid-January 2022: Ann Newbury—Ceramics

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# Clean Energy Challenge Off To A Strong Start

## Business spotlight

The Solar and Clean Heat Challenge is off to a strong start.

Over 350 residents in Ashland, Framingham, Holliston and Natick have submitted requests for no-cost assessments from the program installers and over 30 clean energy technology systems have been contracted to date!

The MetroWest Solar + Clean Heat Challenge is a regional partnership launched by the municipalities of Ashland, Framingham, Holliston, and Natick to connect residents and small businesses with reliable installers and competitive pricing for clean energy technologies of

- Solar panels, which convert clean, free sunlight to electricity, reduce air pollution, and can reduce or eliminate monthly electricity bills
- Air-source heat pumps, which are a flexible, cost-effective and energy-efficient option for heating and air conditioning
- Ground-source heat pumps, which are the most efficient heating and cooling system available and are reliable even on the coldest days

The MetroWest Solar + Clean Heat Challenge kicked off this past June and will run through the end of the year.

Going solar is good for the environment, it decreases the need for fossil fuels to be burned and is a completely zero-emission energy source. Not only is it good for the environment, but solar saves you money as well. It is an investment in which you can save thousands in avoided electric bill costs and even increase the value of your home. With the solar incentives available currently, there are even more savings to get excited about.

While most people have heard of solar panels and solar energy, there are a couple of other clean energy sources that can also save money over time. They are also as environmentally friendly as solar energy.

Geothermal energy is a clean, efficient way of heating and cooling your home with minimal impact on the environment. The energy savings, in some instances,

can pay off in as little as three to five years.

Electric heat pump systems are becoming increasingly popular because they do not rely on fossil fuels to produce warm and cold air.

Purchasing a heat pump will help reduce the amount of greenhouse gasses that are released into the environment each year. In addition, installing a heat pump instead of a furnace or central air conditioner can help you save money on your utility bills.

A misconception about heat pumps is that they are not effective during our harsh New England winters. In reality, technological advances, along with the real life experiences of home and business owners in the area who have heat pumps, have demonstrated their effectiveness in providing clean heat and cooling year round.

Despite the data showing otherwise, solar and clean energy can have a significant impact in the New England area.

A misconception for solar is that it isn't worth it in New England, when Massachusetts is actually one of the best states to go solar. Even through our seasons, solar produces ample energy and the incentives in New England make going solar more economically viable.

Speaking of being worth it, don't let the upfront costs scare you away. There are plenty of financing sources that can help navigate your way into a cleaner, but less expensive heating system.

Learn more about the MetroWest Solar and Clean Heat Challenge, and meet the vetted partners to see which technologies are right for you! Check out their website or get in touch with the installers for any questions, information, or an estimate for your home. You can save a lot of green by going green, especially through this program.

Visit <https://www.metrowest-cleanenergy.com/> to learn more about each clean energy technology, sign up for a no cost home assessment, and check out upcoming events



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# Ashland Community Theater is Back!

Ashland Community Theater (ACT) founder and director Joe White wants residents to know that his theater is back after over a year of Covid. ACT usually does two shows each year, spring and fall, but with the pandemic shutdowns starting in early 2020, the group pivoted to online and film. "We did the best we could with Zoom, and a short film; we involved about 50 actors," White said. "Now that we are getting back to some normalcy, we are eager to re-engage cast members."

ACT is planning "The Viewing Room," a play, in September and October; "Tommy and Michael," a film, on Oct. 20; and "Dashing Through the Snow," a holiday play, in December.

"The Viewing Room" is ACT's 13th production and it's sixth at Marconi's theater at the Ashland VFW. White will direct the show that will run for five nights: Sept 23-24-25 and Oct 1-2.

"The Viewing Room" is an original comedic play about the death and life of Chester Dum-



Larry Loring and Amanda Callahan rehearse "The Viewing Room." (Photo/supplied)

brosky," White said. "The story takes place in January 2005 at the Hollerbach funeral home; it is the wake of Chester Dumbrosky, patriarch of the Dumbrosky family."

"The play is about family interactions and the interpersonal relationships we all have; or want to have with our families. While every family dynamic is differ-

ent, every one of us plays a role within that dynamic. I guarantee you will see some similarities of a family that you know; maybe even your own. It's a great story about saying things to people who are no longer with us."

"Tommy and Michael" is a short film (45 minutes) that will premiere on Wednesday, Oct. 20 at 8 p.m. at Marconi's the-

**ACT** Ashland Community Theater  
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## The Viewing Room



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ater at the Ashland VFW. "It is a film about friendship, childhood friends who re connect many, many years later. It stars local actors, Jerry Halfhide and Larry Loring, and is based upon a play written by Thom Astro of California. I directed it and produced in conjunction with WACA TV," White said.

Save the date! "Dashing Through the Snow" a holiday play directed by Julie Murphy that will run Dec. 16-17-18, also at Marconi's theater.

How will it work inside the theater? "The safety of our patrons

and actors is our highest priority," White noted. "The news around Covid is changing every day. We may have to limit the number of patrons who come into the theater at any one time. If we need to, we can spread theater-goers out in the hall and over five shows of 'The Viewing Room.'"

Tickets for "The Viewing Room" are \$15 per person and may be purchased online at [AshlandCommunityTheater.com](http://AshlandCommunityTheater.com). To get involved with ACT or to get on the mailing list, email [ashlandcommunitytheater@gmail.com](mailto:ashlandcommunitytheater@gmail.com).



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# Dance Scholarship Program Available for Qualified Families

BY CYNTHIA WHITTY

Annemarie's Dance Centre (ADC) has partnered with Ashland's Director of Human Services Jennifer Wuelfing to connect families in need with the opportunity to dance, thanks to the generosity of the Layla Lynn Bober Memorial Foundation.

ADC owner Chrissy Reynolds said, "The Center is optimistic the partnership will help match families who will be a good fit for the scholarship program. The ideal family will have a student showing a genuine interest in dance but where the financial obligation is otherwise a barrier."

The Layla Lynn Bober Memorial Foundation was created after the sudden passing in 2019 of 4-year-old Layla Lynn Bober from Framingham. Layla was the daughter of Aaron and Kelly (Gold) and little sister to Dominic.

"Annemarie's Dance Centre was blessed to know her as a



The Layla Lynn Bober Memorial Foundation was created to honor Layla's life and will provide scholarships to qualified families with children enthusiastic about dance. (Photo/supplied)

young, enthusiastic student who loved to dance," Reynolds recalled. "The Layla Lynn Bober Memorial Foundation continues to fundraise and advance the

community organizations that made Layla happy to ensure they continue to offer every little girl and boy the happiness and love they so deserve. Annemarie's Dance Centre is just one of the organizations the foundation gives to."

Families that are vetted and accepted through the scholarship program will have class tuition, costumes, and dancewear paid for. The dance program begins Sept. 8 and runs through May. Families will need to make the commitment for these months. The students will have an opportunity to perform at the end-of-year recital.

For more information about the scholarship program, contact Jennifer Wuelfing, Director of Human Services, at 508-532-7942 or Donna Ciccarelli, ADC Young Student Director, at 508-881-5109. For information about the Layla Lynn Bober Memorial Foundation, visit [laylalynnbober-memorialfoundation.org](http://laylalynnbober-memorialfoundation.org).

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# Ashland Business Beat

BY CYNTHIA WHITTY

## Events for Business Professionals

The Ashland Business Association (ABA) will offer an End-of-Summer Social at 126 Self Storage on Thursday, Sept. 2. ABA members are invited to enjoy delicious food, beer and wine provided by 126 Self Storage. This is a great way to connect with other like-minded business professionals and gear up for the fall season.

On Tuesday, Oct. 5, 8 to 9:15 a.m. the ABA will host a coaches

panel, either in person or via Zoom. The participating coaches are Lisa MacDonald (Elleminc Training, Development and Coaching), Suzan Czakowski (The Introverts Marketing Academy), Thomas Bruckauer (The Growth Coach) and Ken Erdelt (AdviCoach - Business Coach and Advisor). Topics will include topics such as growing your business and what owners can do to build resiliency.

To attend ABA events, register online in advance at [ashlandbusinessassociation.com/events](http://ashlandbusinessassociation.com/events).



The ABA partnered with area chambers of commerce—Hopkinton, Marlborough, and MetroWest—to host a members' BBQ at the MetroWest YMCA Family Outdoor Center in Hopkinton on Aug. 3. Over 100 business professionals attended. (Photo/courtesy of David Fox, Photographer)

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## ICYMI: Regional Members' BBQ

A regional business association BBQ was held on Aug. 3 at the MetroWest YMCA Family Outdoor Center Hopkinton. Over 100 business professionals attended from the Ashland Business Association; Hopkinton Chamber of Commerce; Marlborough Regional Chamber

of Commerce; and MetroWest Chamber of Commerce. Sponsors were TJ's Food & Spirits; Clocktown Liquors; Paul M Ne-topski owner of Critical Prism Defense; Our Town Publishing home of Local Town Pages; and David Fox, Photographer. This regional event was started three years ago to help business owners expand their networks.

## It's Fall at The Corner Spot

The town's Economic Development Office recently announced its fall calendar for The Corner Spot at 6 Cherry St. The events are free and open to the public. For up-to-date information on activities and events, visit [thecornerspot.com](http://thecornerspot.com) and [www.facebook.com/thecornerspot-ashland](http://www.facebook.com/thecornerspot-ashland). Some highlights include:

### In the Shed:

- Sept. 24 to 26: 67 Degree Brewing
- Oct. 17 and 18: Zelus Beer Garden

### Events:

- Sept. 2, 10 am: Tot Spot
- Sept. 2, 5:30 pm: Open Mic Night with T.C. Scoops
- Sept. 10, 5 pm: Youth Soccer Day
- Sept. 14, 6 pm: "In the Heights Sing-a-long" with Ashland Public Library
- Sept. 18, 1 to 5 pm: Dragon-fly Festival
- Oct. 2, 2 pm: Fall Fest

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Your Money, Your Independence

# September is the Best Tax Planning Month. Yes, really.

September, not December or April, is the opportune time as it provides roughly 3 months to execute tax planning strategies for the current year while positioning for the year ahead.

Some usual activities:

**Increase 401(k)** - If your social security tax stopped after earning \$142,800 this year, consider allocating that amount (or more) to 401(k) contributions. This will help lower your Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) or if a Roth 401(k), increase your tax-free savings for retirement.

**Tax Loss Harvesting** - No need to wait for the last days of December. In fact, many managers do selling in the fall to comply with wash sale rules and be fully-vested for the new year.

**Work Benefits** - Often, fall is open enrollment, the once-a-year chance to enroll in tax-savings

programs like Health Savings Account (HSA) and Flex Spending Accounts (FSAs).

HSAs enjoy triple-tax benefits, as contributions lower your AGI (reducing taxes owed), funds grow tax-free and are not taxed when used for medical expenses, premiums for long-term care and medicare.

FSA contributions lower your AGI and the 3 programs available are Medical, Dependent Care and Transit (commuter or parking).

Unique for 2021 due to government legislation:

**Child Tax Credit 2021** - Started getting money from the government in July? Those are “advance payments” up to \$3,000 per qualifying dependent child or \$3,600 if under age 6 on Dec. 31, 2021. This tax credit reduces your tax bill on a dollar-for-dollar basis, so



Glenn Brown

if you typically owe taxes, might be best to visit IRS.com to opt-out and receive a potential rebate later.

**Dependent Care FSA (DC-FSA)**

**2021** - As referenced in June, new DC-FSA annual limits for pretax contributions increase for most from \$5,000 to \$10,500. Funding DC-FSA not only reduces taxable income but also avoids Social Security and Medicare tax. Thus, MA family in 24% federal tax bracket may have tax savings up to \$3,848 (32% tax bracket is \$4,688). But... your employer may opt-in to new limits within their plan, and have to elect funds to increase.

**Roth Conversion** - The spring “Biden Tax Plan” is still a proposal in late August. Congress would be challenged (to say the least) if new tax laws passed this late in the year were retroactive for 2021. So for some, this may be a 2nd last chance to convert some assets to Roth IRA at current fed-

eral tax rates. Roth Conversion analysis takes time given the variables unique to each individual. Most importantly, conversions should be done near year-end with visibility of projected AGI as these are irreversible.

By focusing on tax planning now, you can relax over the holidays with more savings and less taxes. That calls for another slice of the pie.

*The opinions voiced in this material are for general information only and are not intended to provide specific advice or recommendations for any individual.*

*Glenn Brown is a Holliston resident and owner of PlanDynamic, LLC, www.PlanDynamic.com. Glenn is a fee-only Certified Financial Planner™ helping motivated people take control of their planning and investing, so they can balance kids, aging parents and financial independence.*



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Melissa Mahr, MD

Board certified in internal medicine, Dr. Mahr earned her medical degree from Tufts University School of Medicine. Upon completion of a combined internal medicine and pediatrics residency at University of Maryland, she spent three years in primary care at Johns Hopkins and the last 16 years with Reliant Medical Group.

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# Valentine Estate: Where Are We Now?

By CYNTHIA WHITTY

If you drive by 133 West Union St. (Route 135), you see the Valentine Estate, a historic house and a large 250-year-old barn on almost 8 acres, and may wonder what is up with this property. Will it be repaired? Torn down? And if you have lived in town for the past few years, you may remember that the property is owned by the town.

The Valentine Estate was purchased in 2018 by the town of Ashland for \$3.5 million following votes by residents at town meeting and at the ballot. At the time of the purchase it was unclear as to the future use of the property though a myriad of uses had been discussed. What was clear in the language of the town meeting warrant article was that the property was purchased for “open space and parkland purposes.” Municipal properties purchased for those specific purposes automatically become what is known as Article 97 land. ([www.mass.gov/service-details/how-is-land-protected](http://www.mass.gov/service-details/how-is-land-protected))

Article 97 is an amendment to the Massachusetts Constitution adopted in 1972 with the intention of preventing the loss of public spaces used for park and conservation purposes. It adopts a “no net loss” policy for the disposition of any such land through sale, lease, or use. Any disposition must pass through an arduous review both at the state and local level.

## Restrictions Still Needed

Because the town’s Community Preservation Act funds (CPA) were used to buy the property (the rest of the money came from a debt exclusion) the CPA requires that both a conservation restriction and a historical restriction be negotiated for the properties. These restrictions are negotiated between the town and what is known as a “holder.” Under these agreements, the town retains ownership of the property, while the holder (usually a non-profit organization or a government agency) enforces the agreed-to conditions to keep



(Photo/supplied)

the property in its intended use. Warren Woods on the south side of town, for example, has such a restriction where the town owns the property and Massachusetts Audubon holds the conservation restriction.

Soon after the property was purchased, the town appointed David Foster as project manager to oversee the following maintenance work, which included cleaning out the barn and se-

curing it from the weather; repairing the chimney through the Veterans Construction Group; cleaning out the house, filling a 60-yard dumpster with debris; and removing trees and clearing land.

Also, in 2019, the Select Board appointed a Valentine Property Committee to consider possible uses. In fall of 2020 the town issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the possible sale or lease of the

property. Also in 2020 the Select Board authorized two warrant articles regarding the Valentine Estate. One article authorized the Select Board to sell or lease the property, the second requested a zoning change to allow for commercial development. When the Board was made aware that these proposals were not allowable under Article 97, the articles were pulled from the warrant.

At town meeting in June, \$125K was approved to start work on the barn and grounds.

Recently, the Select Board appointed Brandi Kinsman and Steve Mitchell to a sub-committee to draft a historical and conservation restrictions document for Select Board consideration. The sub-committee held a public meeting on July 13. Article 97 and CPA legal requirements, as well as potential allowable uses, were reviewed with Town Counsel Lisa Mead. Next steps will include work on a draft document. According to Mitchell, a holder “is to be determined.”

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# The b.LUXE *beauty beat*

With the unofficial end of summer just a few days away, and our uncomplicated schedules coming to a close, we'll soon say goodbye to our warm weather wardrobes, beach hair and sandals.

This final week of summer has most likely been a bit crazy for you. There's the endless shopping list of back to school supplies, new clothes, sports equipment and of course, haircuts.

But we're pretty sure more than a few parents are doing their happy dance with the return of some "kid free" time.

Sure, you'll feel that tug at your heart as your little climbs the steps of the big yellow bus. You might even shed a tear or two, but hear that? Exactly. Seven hours of peace and quiet.

Let's face it, it's been two and half months of picking up wet bathing suits, sweating on the ballfield, driving your kids EVERYWHERE, and packing for all those "relaxing" vacations. Summer has its amazing moments, but for families with kids at home, the return to school is a much-needed time for parents to regroup and exhale.

So, with seven hours, sans children, what should you do? Hmmm?

We think it's time to book yourself some "me" time.

First, let's start with a round of applause for all you parents out there!! You survived another chaotic summer and got those kids back on their academic schedules. Now...what do YOU need?

It's easy to fall into the trap of feeling guilty for taking quality time for yourself, but there's a reason there's an article touting the benefits of "self-care" in every blog, magazine and post. Because it's true! We're our best selves when we feel good. We need time to revive and rejuvenate and that comes with what again? That's right, self care!

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# Are You a Mycophile? If So, Ashland Farmers Market Has Mushrooms for You

BY MARGY GASSEL AND ASHLEY THOMPSON

Joyberry Farms in Mason, New Hampshire, has been growing mushrooms commercially and selling them at the Ashland Farmers Market (AFM) for the past three seasons. How did owners Amy and Brad Ikenberry get started in this unusual venture?

“I don’t think Amy or I ever planned on growing mushrooms for a living,” Brad said. “The idea came about for Joyberry Farms three years ago when Amy was pregnant with our first child. We were wondering what we could do to work for ourselves and spend more time together, and started joking about mushrooms. We own a couple of horses and always laughed about our pile of horse manure and the mushrooms that would grow on it! We would tell each other that we are great at growing mushrooms, they love us! Maybe we should do it for living!”

“When our daughter Madisyn was born, she came about eight

weeks early. So, the maternity time turned into a four-month period as she needed some extra help. This extra time together for Amy was a blessing that we didn’t want to end. A few weeks after Madi was born we both looked at each other and confessed that we didn’t want to go back to work for someone else! We decided to use our savings, and the time we had at home, to renovate a barn on our property into a mushrooms house and jump in with two feet. We have never looked back.”

In the past few years our society has been becoming increasingly more aware of the amazing and even remarkable health benefits of mushrooms.

Mushrooms are low in calories, carbohydrates, fat, and sodium, and provide protein, B vitamins, vitamin D, selenium, potassium, and fiber. Mushrooms are also exceptionally high in antioxidants.

In addition to delivering important nutrients, many studies have demonstrated the medicinal

properties of mushrooms. They have antibacterial, antifungal, and antiviral properties, and are also used in cancer treatment due to antitumoral attributes. They reduce inflammation and stimulate the immune system, and can reduce high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and hyperglycemia. Medicinal mushrooms are used in the prevention or treatment of Parkinson’s, Alzheimer’s, and heart disease. (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov)

Because of these amazing health benefits people are looking for more ways to realize these affects. Joyberry also makes mushrooms powders, teas, and tinctures to offer more efficient and/or concentrated forms of some of the more potent medicinal.

*AFM is open every Saturday through Oct. 9 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 125 Front St., on the grass across from the Ashland Public Library. For more information and to sign up for weekly email, visit www.AshlandFarmersMarket.org*



Brad Ikenberry sells his gourmet mushrooms at the Ashland Farmers Market. (Photo/supplied)

## Mushrooms: Valued Over the Centuries

Mushrooms have been valued as food and health supplements by humans for thousands of years. The archaeological record reveals edible species associated with people living 13,000 years ago in Chile—Ötzi, the mummy of a man who lived between 3400 and 3100 BCE in Europe, was found with two types of mushrooms—but it is in China where consumption of wild fungi is first reliably noted, several hundred years before the birth of Christ. It is less well known that countries such as Mexico and Turkey, and major areas of central and southern Africa, also have a long and sig-



There are two different categories of people: Mycophiles (those who love mushrooms) and Mycophobes (those who fear mushrooms). Which are you?

nificant tradition of eating wild edible fungi. (See The National Center for Biotechnology Information, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov)

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# Ashland Garden Club Resumes In-Person Meetings in September

BY CYNTHIA WHITTY

The Ashland Garden Club (AGC) will welcome five new members at its meeting planned for 10 a.m., Saturday, Sept. 11, in the Ashland Public Library Cheever Room. The new members, Ana DiMascio, Melissa Nadeau, Pursvashi Padye, Ashley Thompson, and Susan Wax, all share a love of the wonderful world of gardening and many gardening experiences, according to AGC President Gretchen Bravacos.

Although AGC hasn't met as a group in recent months, members have been busy carrying out the club's mission to beautify Ashland's public spaces.

"I am particularly pleased that we were able to replant the gardens at the post office" Bravacos said. "Over the years that site has been very difficult to plant because the soil, particularly on the right side of the ramp, is very sandy. Members have been analyzing and working on enriching the soil. In early August, we dug up plants that we wanted to divide or move, and enriched the soil once again. When we had the soil analyzed, one of the rec-



The garden at the Ashland library is one of many public spaces in town maintained by Ashland Garden Club members. (Photo/Gretchen Bravacos)

ommendations was to plant succulents. So what you see today is a combination of shrubs, and a variety of succulents. The taller pink succulent just starting to bloom is Sedum Autumn Joy and the low-growing succulents along the walk are Sedum Drag-

on's Blood. To add more color, we replanted some vinca that had been there. We also planted a new hybrid perennial Cone Flower along both sides of the ramp because we know that the soil is best there. The yellow succulents along the walk to the left of the ramp is Sedum Little Miss Sunshine."

At the time of this writing, Covid-19 restrictions are easing and allowing for in-person gatherings. AGC members are looking forward to resuming their programming to educate members and the public in the study of horticulture and the pleasures, benefits, and rewards of gardening.

Members benefit from each other's expertise in a variety of topics, such as growing orchids, using ergonomic tools that make gardening safe and efficient, and planting a raised rock garden. Each garden club meeting ends with a question and answer period where members or guests can ask a question and then benefit from information gardeners share. AGC meetings and programs are open to the public. If you have a topic that interest you and think others would enjoy learning about, send your ideas to [Info@AshlandGardenClub.org](mailto:Info@AshlandGardenClub.org).

## Local Author Book Fair

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# Annual Car Show Raises Money For American Cancer Society

On Sept 18, the 8th annual Car Show in Ashland, where all proceeds for the show goes to American Cancer Society, will be held by the Kidde Fenwal Relay for Life team.

In the past we have had over 200 antique cars at our show, coming from all over Metrowest and New England and an additional 300 spectators that come to the show to just see the cars.

The show is run like a festival as we have food vendors, a live band and a DJ at the show. But most importantly all the money raised from the show goes to American Cancer Society, we have no expenses as people donate their time to make this show happen.



The Kidde Fenwal Relay for Life team over the past 8 years through events similar to this have raised over \$250K for American Cancer Society.

**Sat., September 18<sup>th</sup>**  
**Show 9am - 2pm**  
**Kidde-Fenwal Car Show**  
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**American Cancer Society**  
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## Musicians Raise Funds for Warren Woods Stewardship

Several groups of musicians have contributed to the Warren Woods Stewardship Fund. Stewardship Fund Chair Carl Hakansson and a number of his musician friends in June played two outdoor concerts, one in Western Massachusetts and one in Maine that raised around \$5,000 for the fund. Additional contributions brought the total to \$10,000.

“It was a great gesture of

generosity by a great group of people who I have known and performed with for many years,” Hakansson said. “Many of these folks have not had a payday from performing in quite some time and have never actually been to Warren Woods. These are shows that some of us have performed at for many years but were cancelled last year due to the pandemic. Private donations from



two of my legal colleagues were added, as well as a royalty check I received from having a song included on a movie soundtrack.”

The land, which was acquired by the town in 2012, is one of the largest corridors of permanently protected space inside Rt. 495 in Metrowest, according to Mass Audubon. It encompasses nearly 120 acres of woods and hay fields off Chestnut Street, and hosts a diverse habitat that includes red and gray foxes, white-tailed deer, coyotes, great-horned owls, Eastern bluebirds, fisher, and red-tailed hawks.

Soon after Ashland made the land purchase, the Ashland Conservation Commission formed the Land Stewardship Committee to lay out a land management plan. The plan includes managing invasive plants, maintaining the trails and fields, installing signage, restoring historic aspects of the Woods, such as the stonewalls and hayfields, promoting the historic and ecological aspects of the Woods, and creating a sustainable funding source to maintain Warren Woods for generations to come.

The Warren Woods Stewardship Fund is a private fund that assists in deferring the costs of maintaining the property.

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# Sports

## Alan and Nancy Cantor, PMC Riders

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,  
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

In 1980 Billy Starr founded the Pan Mass Challenge, and over those years the PMC has raised more money for charity than any other single fundraising event in the country.

The Dana Farber Cancer Institute, a world leader in adult and pediatric cancer treatment and research, has been the primary recipient. During that first year, there were 36 riders and 10 volunteers who were able to raise \$10,200; today there are over 6800 riders and another three thousand volunteers that have managed to raise \$767 million.

Alan and Nancy Cantor of Ashland have been participating in the ride for the majority of its existence. Alan has been involved with the PMC for 29 years, while his wife Nancy has gotten aboard her bike for 23.

While working at Landmark World Wide an employee brought in a video of the PMC and Nancy was hooked. Unfortunately, working fulltime she wasn't able to properly train and didn't participate in the actual ride and the next year she was once again sidelined, as she was pregnant with her son. Eventually Nancy was able to take to the road on her bike when her son was 6 years old, and a friend watched him during her ride.

One year after Nancy's original thought of taking part I the PMC Alan decided he was going to take on the challenge.

"The first time that I had ever heard about the PMC was when I read a pamphlet on the event and as I did a voice in my head said that I had to do this for the kids," he said. "I had never ridden more than 10 miles in any given day, so I got out my very old and heavy bike and started riding it to and from work (Arlington into Boston 8 miles each way) so that I could prepare myself for the 192-mile trek."

That first year was somewhat of an experience where Alan found himself riding alone but he did hook up with people he knew and others he didn't here and there along the route.

"Back in the early days there were not a lot of riders, so I was



Alan

just out there to ride the course. The benefit was meeting new people along the course that you would ride with and most you would never see again," Alan said.

In addition to having few riders, there was no real commitment to donation minimums as they have today. Alan earned \$1,600 for Dana Farber that first year and since 2007 he has been a heavy hitter in donations. This year, with a goal of raising \$28,000, he is looking to surpass \$250,000 in donations since his first ride.

The Cantors not only rode for the PMC, but they adopted a pedal partner in Declan Rourke, their stepdaughter's nephew, who had been diagnosed with a serious brain cancer that carried a very low survival rate at the age of 1.

Six years into Alan's participation of the PMC Nancy finally got her chance to get on her bike and aid the cause.

"Alan and I ride separate from one another and during my first year (around 1998 or 99) I had been training with someone throughout the year but come the day of the ride she didn't ride with me," Nancy said. "So, I basically rode the first 40-miles of the 192-mile event by myself. Eventually I started connecting and talking with other riders to pass the time."



Karen (Declan and his mom in the back)

In her sixth campaign she joined the Stem Cell Cyclist team under the guidance of Dr. Corey Cutler. While she was riding for Stem Cell, two of her co-workers' husbands had stem cell transplants performed by Dr. Cutler not knowing that was the group Nancy rode with and they donated to each year.

"Riding with Dr. Cutler I've gotten to know him and form a relationship," she said. "People know what we are funding and it's been great. It feels really good to make a difference."

In 2019 Nancy had to once again forego the PMC weekend as she was in a serious cycling accident during a training ride and was forced to spend the next three weeks in the hospital and doing rehab. Having no real ride last year due to Covid-19, she is very motivated in two ways to get back onto her bike and take part in the PMC.

"This year Declan is 16 years old, and he will be riding with his mom (Mel Pepin), and I want them to feel comfortable in their first year (unlike mine) so I will be riding with them on Saturday," Nancy said, "Secondly I want to break the \$100,000 mark (she needs \$6743 in donations to do so this year)."

At the time of this writing Nancy had already surpassed her early total to get her over the \$100,000 mark during her 23 years with close to \$7000 in donations.

Nancy has been more than impressed with young Declan's optimism about preparing for

the event on Aug. 7. During a 30-mile practice ride in 95-degree heat Declan continued to push forward.

With this is 29th year riding for PMC Alan is hoping to be able to ride for another 20 years.

"As long as my legs allow me to turn the pedals, then I'll be back," he said. "The benefit outweighs everything else, especially Declan being alive. This has become something that I am very passionate about."



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# The Top 10 Reasons “Why Giving Back Feels So Good.”

AUTHOR: HEATHER J. CULKEEN

## Charitable Foundation: Project Perseverance

What does it mean to give back to society? Giving back or donating to causes close to your heart benefits both the charity and you. Contributing to your worthy causes has far more benefits than you may realize.

Many give their time, talents, and/or money to the support community causes, which they hold dear to their heart. Giving back has also been shown to improve quality of life. So, to answer the question, why is giving to charity so satisfying? Here are the top 10 reasons “why giving back feels so good.”

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### 1. Bring meaning to your Life:

By donating or giving back, you are creating opportunities to meet people who believe in the same causes as you do. The interaction with like-minded people can inspire you to create a real impact on these causes. It can also infuse your life with a purpose or meaning in case you are stuck in a rut wondering why life is so stagnant. Giving back can reinvigorate your life.

### 2. Help others in need:

There will never be a perfect time to give back as we are not living in a perfect world. But there are always others who need help in tough situations. A simple compliment to anyone, even a stranger, can brighten their day at no cost. It may even change their life.

### 3. The Time is Now:

Regardless of the state of the economy or the pending rise in taxes and interest rates, it is not only kind to donate to those in need. Our financial difficulties hopefully last only a short time, but for those in need may could last a lifetime unless they get on the right path. For others more fortunate, just by providing a hand, donation, smile will go a long way to help those in need survive and thrive.

### 4. Strengthens personal values:

When asked why they want to give back, 96% of people who participated in the research said that they are feel obliged to help others. They said that it's a moral duty which is rooted in their principles and personal values. Acting on these feelings is the responsibility of a human.

### 5. Teach generosity to children:

When children see you giving back, they will adopt the same attitude when they grow up. Many people stated that they learned how to give back from their parents and through personal experiences. You are benefiting humanity by teaching children to give, share, and donate.

### 6. Inspire friends and family:

If you educate your family and friends about your charitable donations after you've given back, they could be inspired to do the same. They may take your lead and donate whatever they can, especially to communal issues like promoting health, providing opportunities to rise above obstacles, and allowing others to achieve their goals. Giving back ignites a fire within you.

### 7. Realize that small donations help:

You don't always have to donate large amounts to make a difference. Even small amounts could result in weeks, months, and possible years of meals for starving children or the much-needed medical help for elders.

### 8. Improve Money Management:

You can also drive yourself to be a better personal family financial manager by allocating a specific amount to each donation each month. You can make donations, fund your family's education, retirement, and other financial goals this way.

### 9. Give, when you can't volunteer:

In cases where you think that you should volunteer but are too busy to spend time for a worthy cause, you can donate money. Money is just a work-around for a time as it helps the organizations to acquire more resources that can improve the cause.

### 10. Spreading the love:

You can demonstrate that love exists by giving back to society. While spreading love, charity gives people hope for humanity. If you can't afford to donate, consider how a tiny gesture could help you achieve your desired feelings while also making others feel good about themselves.

Project Perseverance is dedicated to organizing and funding rescue efforts as well as delivering contributions to local and early stage non-profit organizations. We support children, families, elders, and others experiencing challenges that make us stronger.

To donate to Project Perseverance to help support our mission to give back, please email us at [ProjectPerseverance888@gmail.com](mailto:ProjectPerseverance888@gmail.com) with subject line: PP888. The QR Code and link will be emailed for you to donate. Please feel free to suggest a cause via email that you feel would benefit from our support as well. Thank You.

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# Real Estate Corner

## Statement from Senate President Karen E. Spilka on Masks in Schools

Next month, almost a million children will return to Massachusetts K-12 public schools. Of these kids, nearly half will be under 12 years old and therefore ineligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine before returning to the classroom.

Throughout the spring and summer, I joined parents and teachers in the hope that our children could return to school with a sense of normalcy. With the rise of the highly contagious Delta variant, however, the situation is clear: COVID-19 case counts

are rising. The number of deaths is once again rising, including among those who have been vaccinated. This means that we are not quite ready to return to our pre-pandemic 'normal.'

Public health experts and the American Academy of Pediatrics agree that universal masking in schools is an effective way to keep our vulnerable children and residents safe as we continue to fight this global pandemic. Parents, school staff and students seek clear, consistent direction as the school year starts, and they

deserve to get it from the state. That's why I am calling on the Baker Administration to require masks in school this fall.

No one wants to go back to the dark early days of this public health crisis, and so we must do everything possible to keep people safe and our economy stable. Wearing a mask around vulnerable populations, including unvaccinated children and others, is a small and simple action we can take to do this.

Our children deserve to learn, grow and thrive in a safe and healthy environment, free from the disruption, anxiety and fear of a COVID-19 outbreak in their school. Massachusetts residents have shown such amazing compassion, caring and resilience throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. We need to keep going until our youngest and most vulnerable can be vaccinated.



## Federated Church of Ashland September 2021


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# Free Meals Available for 2021-22 School Year

Ashland Public Schools (APS) will be participating in the National School Lunch Program. As part of this program, APS will offer healthy meals every school day. For the 2021-2022 school year each child will be eligible for one free breakfast and one free lunch each school day these meals are offered.



household that receives public assistance, or if the child is homeless, migrant, runaway, foster, or participates in a Head Start or Even Start pre-K program. Household size and income criteria are used to determine eligibility for free and reduced-price benefits

Although meals are free this school year, APS encourages families to complete an application if they have not received a letter from Ashland Nutrition Services notifying them they are directly certified for free meals. If your application is approved, you may be eligible for additional benefits.

Qualifications for children to receive free or reduced price meals include: belonging to a household whose income is at or below the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines, belonging to a

if the household does not receive assistance or the children are not in the other categories mentioned above. Children can get free or reduced-price meals if the household's gross income falls at or below the limits on the Federal Income Eligibility Guideline chart.

To apply for free or reduced-price meals, households can fill out the application and return it to the school unless the household has already received notification that their children

FEDERAL ELIGIBILITY INCOME CHART For School Year 2021-2022			
Household size	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly
1	\$23,828	\$1,986	\$459
2	\$32,227	\$2,686	\$620
3	\$40,626	\$3,386	\$782
4	\$49,025	\$4,086	\$943
5	\$57,424	\$4,786	\$1,105
6	\$65,823	\$5,486	\$1,266
7	\$74,222	\$6,186	\$1,428
8	\$82,621	\$6,886	\$1,589
Each additional person:	+8,399	+700	+162

are approved for free meals this year. Application forms are being distributed to all households with a letter informing households of the availability of free and reduced-price meals for their children and what is required to complete on the application. Applications also are available on our district website, www.ashland.k12.ma.us, and at all school main offices.

Only one application is required for all children in the household and the information

provided on the application will be used for the purpose of determining eligibility and verification of data. Applications may be verified at any time during the school year by the school or other program officials. An application for free or reduced-price benefits cannot be approved unless it contains complete eligibility information as indicated on the application and instructions. In the operation of child feeding programs, no child will be discriminated against because of race, sex, color, national origin, age, or disability.

Families can apply for benefits at any time. If a household member becomes unemployed or if the household size increases, the household should contact the school. Such changes may make the children of the household eligible for benefits if the household's income falls at or below the Federal Guidelines. Contact Ashland Nutrition Services at any time to request an application.

Under the provisions of the free and reduced-price policy, Lisa Beaudin, Director of Nutrition Services will review applications and determine eligibility. Parents or guardians dissatisfied with the ruling of the official may wish to discuss the decision with the determining official on an informal basis. Parents wishing to make a formal appeal for a hearing on the decision may make a request either orally or in writing to Christopher Mathieu, Director of Finance Ashland Public Schools, 87 West Union Street, Ashland MA, 508-881-0156

When known to Ashland Public Schools, households will be notified of their children's eligibility for free meals if they are members of households receiving

assistance from the: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR); or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), if the State program meets Federal standards.

An application is not required for free meal benefits for Assistance Program participants and all of the children in the household are eligible for free meal benefits. If any children were not listed on the notice of eligibility, or if a household does not receive a notice of eligibility, the household should contact the school to have free meal benefits extended to them. Participants in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) may be eligible for free or reduced-price meals, but they will need to turn in an application including household size and total income.

When known to APS households will also be notified of any child's eligibility for free meals if the individual child is considered "Other Source Categorically Eligible", because the child is categorized, as defined by law as: Foster, Lisa, Migrant, Runaway, Enrolled in an eligible Head Start, or Enrolled in an eligible pre-kindergarten class.

If any children were not listed on the notice of eligibility, the household should contact the school about their eligibility through the list above, or should submit an income application. Households notified of their children's eligibility must contact the school if the household chooses to decline the benefits. For more information, call Lisa Beaudin at 508-881-0165 or email lbeaudin@ashland.k12.ma.us.

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